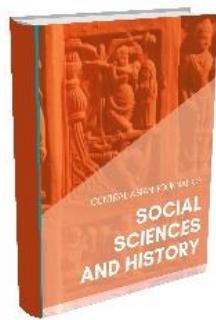




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The Importance and Contextual Semantics of Slangs in English Language

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Annotation:

This article is devoted to the analysis of the slangs, its usage in the texts, distinct meaning as well as structural and semantic classification based on the study of examples of various texts and everyday life. The primary role of the slangs, as a lexical figure, is to put forward ease the language usage. The article analyzed views of scientists on the lexical-semantic concepts of the slangs and presented examples from literary works and reflected them in the article.

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INTRODUCTION

The English language is considered a predominant language all over the world. Hence, it is obvious that the English language is accepted as a dominant language for communication. Furthermore, the English language is also the language of science, diplomacy, mass media and world information sources. The usage of various language features including slangs is becoming more and more common in various texts, daily conversation and their clear analysis is necessary.

METHODOLOGY

Slang is vocabulary feature that is used between people who belong to the same social group and who know each other well. Slang is very informal language. It can offend people if it is used about other people or outside a group of people who know each other well. We usually use slang in speaking rather than writing. Slang normally refers to particular words and meanings but can include longer expressions and idioms.

Slang changes quickly, and slang words and expressions can disappear from the language. For these reasons, it is generally best for learners of English to avoid using slang.

Slang is an informal nonstandard variety of speech characterized by newly coined and rapidly

changing words and phrases. In his book *Slang: The People's Poetry* (OUP, 2009), Michael Adams argues that "slang is not merely a lexical phenomenon, a type of word, but a linguistic practice rooted in social needs and behaviors, mostly the complementary needs to fit in and to stand out."

"The most significant characteristic of slang overlaps with a defining characteristic of jargon: slang is a marker of in-group solidarity, and so it is a correlate of human groups with shared experiences, such as being children at a certain school or of a certain age, or being a member of a certain socially definable group, such as hookers, junkies, jazz musicians, or professional criminals. (Keith Allan and Kate Burridge, *Forbidden Words*. Cambridge University Press, 2006)

"Slang serves the outs as a weapon against the ins. To use slang is to deny allegiance to the existing order, either jokingly or in earnest, by refusing even the words which represent conventions and signal status; and those who are paid to preserve the status quo are prompted to repress slang as they are prompted to repress any other symbol of potential revolution." (James Sledd, "On Not Teaching English Usage." *The English Journal*, November 1965)

"The downtrodden are the great creators of slang. . . . Slang is . . . a pile of fossilized jokes and puns and ironies, tinselly gems dulled eventually by overmuch handling, but gleaming still when held up to the light. " (Anthony Burgess, *A Mouthful of Air*, 1992)

It is not clear to what extent the **slang** impulse to enliven speech, the impulse to stand out, mingles with the slang impulse toward social intimacy, the impulse to fit in. At times they seem like oil and water, but at others the social and poetic motivations emulsify into one linguistic practice

Before considering the function of slang, it is necessary to consider the significance of language in general. I think the following aspects of language can be directly translated to slang and used to explain the importance of slang, seeing as slang is an integral part of language, and it is a form of language. Anca Sirbu explains that "language is essentially a means of communication among the members of society" and that "common language is the one of the most important features of a community" (Sirbu 1). Furthermore, she states that language is "a tool that conveys traditions and values related to group identity" (Sirbu 1). Seeing as Sirbu talks about language in relation to society, community, and groups, indicates that language has a far greater significance within a group than it does on an individual level. The fact that language is related to group identity is extremely important to consider when it comes to slang, because slang has a strong association with groups.

RESULT

Slang is also connected to the identity of a group. As Sirbu says, language is a conveyor of a group's tradition and values, and Mauer explains that if a creator of a slang expression/word "is a member of a group that finds his creation projects the emotional reaction of its members toward an idea, person, or social institution, the expression will gain currency according to the unanimity of attitude within the group" (Mauer 1).

The fact that slang will only "gain currency" within a group if it matches their attitude is an indicator that slang can be used to express the identity of a group. An example of this can be found in any new generation. As generations come and go, so do certain phrases and words, but there is a reason that slang associated with one generation, is usually not found in the next. Daily Arts writer Sam Rosenberg reminds readers that in the 1950s, "an age swept up in conservative values, young people used "swell" as their very own colloquialism" (Rosenberg).

The 1950's followed WWII, and people were doing their best to recuperate. They had hope for the future and were "content, but many others felt ill at ease because of the speed at which the world was changing" (Shmoop). In order to cope and mask their troubles, people "embraced religion and visited psychiatrists in unprecedented numbers" (Shmoop).

An example of where slang proves to be an important feature of a community or group is on college campuses. Just as it differs from group to group what particular, slang they use to communicate with each other, every college campus has slang particular to their own campus. A study on campus slang found that in order for students to effectively communicate with each other and cooperate with each other, "the first important thing is to speak one common language, that is, campus slang" (Wang 4). A group can have more of an understanding for each other when they use a common language such as slang, which in turn increases the level of communication and cooperation.

A specific example of how slang can be used to make conversation more casual is in regards to talking about taboo subjects. Slang "serves to change the level of conversation from formal to informal, allowing users to handle awkward social situations. Slang is often used to discuss semi-taboo subjects, such as: drunkenness, sexual organs and activities, drugs and drug use, 'elimination' and 'bodily waste'" (Hess). While it is believed that slang can make awkward conversations easier to navigate because it takes away some formality from the conversation, I also think it makes it easier to talk about the above taboo subjects because completely new names are given to them.

That way people can talk about taboo subjects without ever directly needing to say taboo terms. For example, it's a lot easier to casually talk about genitalia by using slang words, rather than using the scientific terms. Additionally, an overwhelming 82% of respondents to my survey agree that slang makes it easier to discuss the taboo subjects stated above. Considering all this information, I think slang acts to take away stress associated with formal situations, which in turn relaxes individuals, and makes communication easier, and more casual.

Recently, with the rapid use of internet and social media, slang words are growing. There are many slang words which are formed because the influence of social media (Zhang et al., 2016)[14], such as in Indonesia there are the word "gabut". it is possible that students may introduce slang words into their online classroom when they speaking either with their classmates or teacher.

The description of what slang words, the context, and the function will be revealed on this study. Several studies have done to investigate the use of slang words in different context, but small number researchers investigated the use of slang word in education, especially in the context of online learning. Firstly, in the context of social media, (Trimastuti, 2017)[12] analyzed the use of slang Indonesian slang words in social media, those are BlackBerry messenger, twitter, Instagram, path, line and Facebook. In order to collect the data, writer used the method of observation.

It is found that the slang words used mostly were Alay language, Indonesian slang language that was formed by nonstandard alphabetical writing that consisted the combination between letter and number.

DISCUSSION

Students mostly did not use slang words all the time, there were several situation and context they used the slang words. The first was (1) they used slang words when they chatted with their classmates in discussing informal topic such as holiday, make up class, and connection problem. Secondly, students used slang words to express feelings; the feeling of adored (uwu), confused, happy (lol), fascinated (gass, gaskeun), enthusiastic (semongko). Third, slang words were also used to address a name,

especially students' classmates, such as the word "sist, gan, bro, bor, lur, slur, dude, and kak". Students explained that the use of slang word for addressing a name is indicated that they have closer relationship.

In communication, language is the main element. How people use language for communication is different from one another. When talking to someone who is older from the speaker people use polite ways than when talking to someone who is younger from the speaker. Holmes (2000) added that people's speech reflects not only aspects of their identity such as their ethnicity, age, gender, and social background, it also reflects the contexts in which they are using the language. The way people talk reflects the formality of those context and the social roles people take in them. Language varies from one social group to another social group, from one situation to another situation, and from one place to another place. Variation shows that every speaker does not speak the same way all the time. Language varieties indicate that the speakers are distinct from members of other groups (Finegan, 2008:330)[3]. Language variety that signifies particular situations of use is called registers, it is appropriate for use in particular speech situations. There are some examples of language variations that are of interest to linguist according to Akmajian et al (1998), lingua francas, pidgins, creoles, jargon, slang, and taboo language. In this research, the focus was only on the language variation which could be categorized as slang.

Social network is one of the factors that affects the use of English slang words. Lesley Milroy mentioned in his study of social network in Belfast concerning some of the advantages of social network: it is a useful tool for studying small, self-contained groups in detail; it is useful in situations (such as school children or immigrant communities) where the concept of social class is either irrelevant or not clear-cut; and it is based on the relationship between individuals rather than subsuming individuals into group averages, and so it is fundamentally inter-subjective. From Milroy's opinion it can be concluded that social network becomes an important part of someone that affects his or her style of communication. How they communicate each other is influenced by their social network or people around them.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that slang only emerges if it is used by a group. Once groups have acquired certain words or phrases, and start using them to communicate with other members of the group, those certain words and phrases will become more known and popular. Various definitions have been given on the concept of slang, and its usage is debated contentiously.

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